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PORTRAIT PAINTING.

II.—THE SKETCH—THE PALETTE—FIRST PAINTING.

It may be granted, as a general rule, that the amateur or artist who takes to the difficult art of portrait painting without necessity has a real vocation for it. If he only thinks he has, he is likely soon to be disabused. The portrait painter gets more candid criticism of his work than any other artist; and, all allowances made, the criticism of laymen on a portrait is more likely to be correct than that which the same persons might venture on a landscape or a figure subject other than a portrait. We have tried to guard the artist from the improper criticisms of his sitter, who will often exclaim, "I am sure I do not look like that," or "I do not recognize myself in the least," when the picture is really a striking likeness, because the artist has chosen an attitude or an expression which the sitter has not identified himself with in his own mind. But while his views and those of his immediate friends are always to be taken "cum grano salis," the verdict of his entire circle of acquaintance is generally apt to be correct. And, in the case of amateur artists at least, it is fair to assume that acquaintances will try as hard to humor his self-conceit as that of his model; so that it is also likely to be expressed in moderate terms. As a rule, then, only those who have the special gift to "catch a likeness" in their first efforts at portraiture are encouraged to proceed; and as the present articles are to deal mainly with the essentials of portrait painting, we may be excused for keeping in view their needs only.

The sketch, whether done in charcoal, pen-and-ink or some dark transparent color, should always be a satisfactory likeness, as far as it goes. It may be only a few lines very freely drawn, or it may amount to what would ordinarily be called a careful and thorough study; in either case it should denote plainly the artist's conception of his subject. The salient points of character and expression should be made out, and so strongly that the after work can hardly obliterate them.

The beginner in portrait painting, for reasons already given, is generally pretty sure to consider himself safe on this point at least. He is certain that his sketch, the cleverness of which is acknowledged by everybody, should make a good foundation for a painting in oils. But it very seldom does. A little examination will show why. The likeness so cleverly conveyed in the sketch is not what may be termed a likeness in gross. In nine cases out of ten it depends on the seizure of some rather subtle bit of character, depending on equally subtle and delicate lines. This may be, and usually is, exaggerated almost to the point of caricature; but that does not make it stronger—rather the reverse. In working over such a sketch every touch of the brush brings out its deficiencies and, at the same time, obliterates the delicate lines on which the likeness depends. The result is likely to be something which is manifestly unlike not only the sitter, but anything that might stand for a human figure.

The clever sketcher of portraits will, then, be obliged, for a long time, to forget his cleverness in the earlier stages of his work, and to draw as if he had before him not a friend whose peculiarities interested or amused him, but a blocked-out head in plaster. Good portrait painters, and men of extraordinary talent at that, do not disdain to go over their sketch three or four times before taking brush in hand. They first very carefully and almost mechanically map out the general shape of the head and features; then, more boldly, they try to give the exact contour of each part, trying, at the same time, for the spirit of the pose; and, lastly, they put in, but still more boldly, the touches which convey the momentary expression, which give the exact degree of openness of the eyelids, of the lips; which show the position of the lower jaw, the degree of contraction of the principal muscles. Even at this stage they are far from noting points which do not escape the beginner. The sketch of a good portrait painter will be held to be in a general way like the sitter. It might be a brother or a sister, as the case may be. But complete individualization is not arrived at till the very end of the work. To put the matter in another way, the first sketch will give the proportions correctly, and some idea of projection. It will show that the artist can draw satisfactorily a wooden tobacco sign. The second will look rather more like a human being, and may convey a definite idea of the pose. The third and fourth will give the general expression, as of attention or amusement, and some of the more marked individual traits. In the final

sketch the lines should err by being too straight rather than by being too round. They should be such as large brush strokes may follow. Charcoal is the material commonly employed for the first and second stages of the sketch; for the final stages some warm transparent brown, as burnt umber or burnt Sienna, is used; but when it may suit the painter's palette better, pen-and-ink may be substituted, particularly if the work is of small size.

In setting the palette for the first painting, it should be considered that this, like the first sketch, is to give generalities only. All delicacies of color, as all refinements of form, must be kept for the last painting. A liberal supply of each pigment is necessary, both because bold, large brush-work cannot be done without a full brush, and because the first painting should give an adequate appearance of solidity, and for this purpose should cover the canvas well. A good palette for first painting may be set with the following colors: white, Naples yellow, yellow ochre, raw Sienna, Venetian red, vermilion, rose madder, terre verte, raw umber, Vandyck brown, ivory black, cobalt.

The light tints will be formed mainly of white and Naples yellow, with and without a little vermilion or Venetian red; the shade tints with umber, raw Sienna, Venetian red and cobalt; the strongest carnations with white and rose madder warmed with a little Naples yellow; the greenish tones of the neck and chin, sometimes also found on the forehead and near the edge of the cheeks, may be approximated with white, black, terre verte and Venetian red or vermilion. In the hair, even when very dark, umber, black, cobalt, yellow ochre, will all be found useful.

Some acknowledged masters go very gingerly to work about the first painting, and the amateur will do well to copy their example. They lay in the shadows with a scumble of black, umber and Venetian red, or, for a very light and delicate complexion, substitute terre verte for the black. The lights are also scumbled with the tints that it is proposed to use, and trying for a characteristic touch. The shade should be laid without a strict mechanical observation of its outlines. It is well, on the other hand, if you can hit the tones of the shade part right at once, as in that case they may stay, and will give a liveliness to the completed work which cannot be got by any other means. The edges of the different tints may be united by a soft brush, thus gaining intermediate gradations, many of which, if successful, may be retained to the end. For making corrections to the work at this stage, a tint composed of terre verte, Venetian red, white and black is very advantageous, as it blends well with either the light or the shade. If a little siccativo be mixed with the colors used for the lights in scumbling, this part of the work may be immediately gone over in impasto, as soon as you have settled upon your tones and upon the exact position of each touch. The impasto should be carried slightly into the shadows, and the reflections should be touched with the loaded brush. The highest lights should be disregarded.

This first painting should give good relief to the head. It should be bright in tone, and should show bold brush work. The more delicate parts of the outline should be avoided.

R. JARVIS.

NEVER continue working at the same subject when you are tired; you will do more harm than good. Take a reasonable rest, and then if practicable go on with something else. For instance, if you have been working from a model all the morning and feel that you are making little or no progress, put away your study, take up your sketch book and if the weather is good go out of doors and draw what takes your fancy. If this is not feasible try a little perspective or bring the skeleton from the cupboard and take a turn at some anatomy. If you have engaged your model for the day, and feel bound to go on with it, start on a fresh part of the picture. A well-known artist told the writer that one of his most successful pictures had stood with its face to the wall half finished for more than a year. At that stage he had wearied of it, having failed to carry out his preconceived ideas to his satisfaction. After repeated attempts to get on with his work, all ending in failure, he determined to destroy it. His wife, noting the merits of the picture, pleaded for it; so he contented himself with putting it out of sight and forgetting it. There it remained in hiding until by chance one day, in looking for something else, he unearthed it. He felt inspired to finish it, and he worked with a will until it grew into one of his best productions. He sent it to the National Academy of Design, and sold it for a good price on the first day it was exhibited.

China Painting.

LESSONS BY A PRACTICAL DECORATOR.

IV.—YELLOW.

IVORY YELLOW gives a warm, delicate tint that is very pleasing to the eye, but in some cases it seems to have proved treacherous, coming from the kiln a brown instead of a yellow. Such a result has never come under my own observation. Experience, however, is a good guide, and if the reader has failed in using ivory yellow, I advise her to try something else. There are certain mixtures of brown and yellow that are very similar in color to ivory yellow, but it is almost impossible to get the same proportions each time, consequently the color will vary. To avoid uncertainty and ensure success, I would recommend silver yellow.

SILVER YELLOW works well and is a charming color, differing so very little in its lighter tints from ivory yellow that, if there is any difference, it is in favor of silver yellow. It always fires well; the artist never need have the slightest anxiety on that account. It is in harmony with almost every decoration, especially with the gold browns and greens used for sunflowers, nasturtiums, roses, tulips, chrysanthemums and the like. It can be shaded with green No. 7, gray No. 1, yellow ochre, yellow brown, brown 4 or 17, and all the reds and carmines. It is not as opaque as jonquil or orange yellow.

In painting large white flowers, if the china is left bare for the white, the glare of the glaze gives it a cold, hard appearance that greatly detracts from the artistic effect. A thin wash of silver yellow that is hardly more than a film will give the flower a thick, creamy look, an almost exact reproduction of its natural appearance.

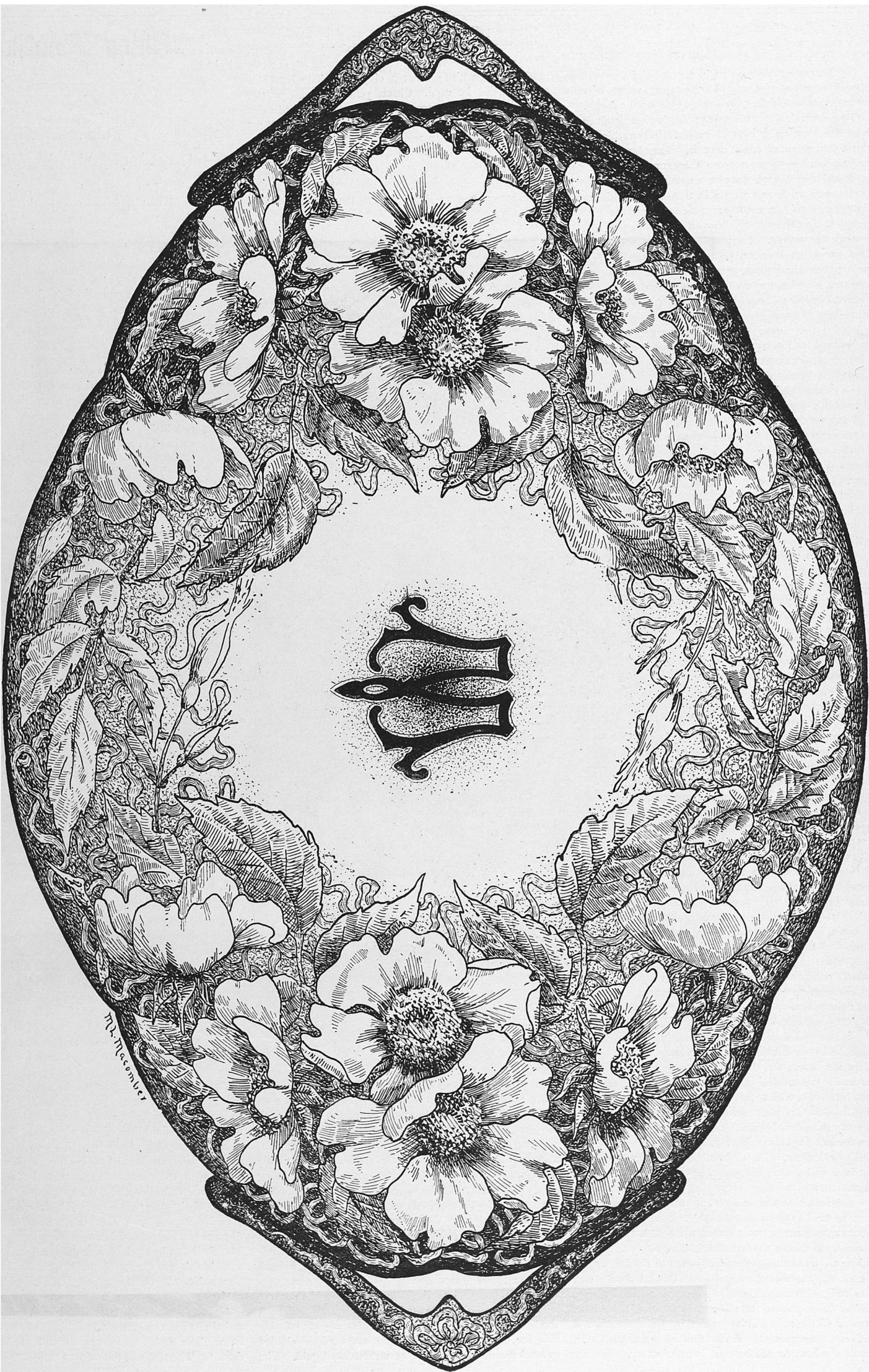
If a cup or vase is to be tinted a delicate yellow and then painted with yellow flowers, the design should be sketched on in India ink before tinting. When the tinting has been thoroughly dried in the oven or over the register, so that it can be handled with safety, the leaves and flowers can be painted in. It is not necessary to remove the paint from the design—the tint will do for the high lights in the flowers. This will save both time and nerves, for scraping off paint is a very tedious process. The design must be painted in with a very light touch or the tint will wash up and so make a very botchy looking piece of work. Carmines can be washed over the yellows in the same way. A very little silver yellow mixed with some of the carmines improves them; but remember that it must be only a little.

If a design worked out in gold is to be used, the paint must be removed or else fired first. Gold used on paint must not be quite as highly fluxed as that used on the bare surface of the china, except in the case of some of the dark colors, in the manufacture of which very little flux is used compared to the quantity used in making the light greens, yellows, pinks and other light colors. Fluxed gold on these is hardly more than a yellow paint that will not respond to the touch of the burnisher. Dark yellow, dark brown No. 1, regular red and apple green gouache colors can be painted on the design, thoroughly dried, and then worked up with fluxed gold. Use the gold rather dry, going over it twice to ensure a rich effect. Do not let it touch the silver yellow or it will not fire well, but on the bronze this is not to be feared. Beautiful borders and conventional designs can be done in this way.

The edges and handles of vases, pitchers and similar articles can have any dark gouache color laid on, not too thick, in two coats, each coat dried, and then gold clouded on or worked up, according to taste. This can be done in one firing, which is a great saving of time and expense, especially if you are obliged to send your china any distance to be fired.

In order to obtain a deep yellow background or border, squeeze the color from the tube, but do not use any turpentine. Use only lavender oil and two or three drops of balsam of copaiva (which can be procured at any drug-store), according to the quantity of paint used. Try the paint first on a piece of china, and if it does not pat smoothly add a little more of the balsam.

Silver yellow is so useful that I think, if the artist's means are limited and only few paints can be bought, it should take the place of the others on the list. Though I have almost every yellow, both in tubes and powder paints, known to the china decorator, I place my entire confidence in silver yellow. Of course I use others. For instance, in painting pink and yellow roses I use



CHINA PAINTING: DECORATION FOR A CAKE PLATE. BY M. L. MACOMBER.

(SEE NEXT PAGE.)

mixing yellow, blending it into the silver; but I think they could be painted with the silver yellow alone and have a very good effect.

Neither silver yellow nor, in fact, any of the yellows should be mixed with any of the purples, violets of gold or maroons. A dull, ugly color would be the result.

To paint a dark purple pansy and give it a rich, velvety look, first lay on a coat of purple. When this is dry put a thin wash of black over it. Then lay on a good body of silver yellow, not too thick, or it will chip, but let it be thick enough to give a depth of color that will correspond with the purple (a thin coat would be too light, and would form too great a contrast to the purple). Lay the silver yellow on the china and not over the purple. The purple marks and veins that are often seen on yellow pansies can be painted on the yellow, provided that this is so dry that it will not mix with the purple.

Silver yellow mixes with all the greens. Mixed with deep chrome green and black it makes a beautiful rich green. If deep chrome green is to be used for tinting, add to it one quarter silver yellow, otherwise it is a very difficult color to manage. With this addition, however, it works like a charm, and gives a tint similar to that of the robin's egg.

YELLOW OCHRE is a very charming tint, and, made very thin—hardly more than a wash—is much used at the Royal Worcester factory, as a ground for raised gold work for tableware. One third yellow ochre mixed with two thirds silver yellow gives a warm tint that is very soft and harmonious with gold, or that would contrast well with pine cones painted in brown 4 or 17 or brown green, or with chrysanthemums in deep red brown, or with red carnations.

MIXING YELLOW is more transparent than silver yellow, but not so warm or rich in color. Mixed with apple or grass green it gives that very delicate color seen in buds in the early spring. It, or a shade of yellow resembling it, is often used by the noted factories of Europe for grounds for raised gold work. Some of my readers have no doubt seen charming little tête-à-tête sets from the celebrated Minton factory, with the ground of a deep tone of this yellow (the depth of tone being obtained by grounding the color on in the dry powder), decorated with raised work in different colored golds and platinum. The past is put on the tint and then fired, and the gold is used for the second firing.

A cream jug and sugar bowl tinted with this color, green gold being used for the handles, makes a very pretty addition to a tea-table. Or the color may be removed from the article (after it is thoroughly dried) with a cloth moistened in alcohol to the depth of half an inch below the edge, and then finished with a gold line. A row of points, a line and dots bring the gold close up to the paint. The space between that and the edge may be filled in with some geometrical design or a delicate vine. There are plenty of suggestions for such designs in every number of *The Art Amateur*, not only among the designs for china painting, but also among the embroidery designs. Look them all over carefully, pick out here and there some pretty little figures that can be combined, and so have something new and, in a measure, original, that will add greatly to the pleasure of the work as well as to its artistic value.

Mixing yellow is not reliable used with the reds or browns. A flower shaded with brown No. 3 or 4 is apt to lose all its shading when subjected to the fire, unless a little ruby is mixed with it—one third, I should say. The reds, also, almost entirely disappear in the firing, while a tulip painted in silver yellow and shaded with any one of the reds will be perfect, provided the color is laid on strong enough. A chrysanthemum shaded with any of the browns will be equally satisfactory.

Opaque yellow, German yellow 11, Albert yellow and primrose yellow all correspond to mixing yellow in tone. Egg yellow is darker and more intense, and is generally made so soft with flux that it chips off. The hard kiln color should be used. Citron yellow, jonquil yellow, orange yellow and orange, which comes only in dry powder, are used extensively in factories. They all resemble silver yellow in color.

M. B. ALLING.

To paint the design given on the preceding page with Lacroix colors, put in the roses with a thin flat tint of carnation No. 1; shade it with the same, and then



MOTIVES FOR DECORATION IN BOUCHER STYLE.

paint over the shadows when dry a delicate wash of green No. 7; paint the centres with silver yellow shaded with yellow brown and dark brown; outline the flowers with deep red brown. For the foliage vary the tints by commencing with flat washes of yellow brown, grass green, and deep blue green mixed with violet of iron. Shade the leaves when dry with brown green, dark shading green and sepia; put the colors on separately, according to the depth required; make the stems of yellow brown shaded with dark brown. Outline the foliage with red brown; paint the letter also with the same color. The graduated background would look well painted with old tile blue with a little black added. This will give a soft blue-gray shade.

The background to the letter must be of the same shade, graduated as indicated in the copy. If preferred, the background can be of gold. This design is suitable also for matt colors, but if these are used the shaded ground should certainly be of unburnished gold. The

colors suggested elsewhere for the rose jar decoration would serve, with the addition of light yellow green and light blue, for some of the first tints on the foliage.

THE SEA-WEED FISH-PLATES.

To simplify the work we have selected a single color for the ground of all the plates, and one on which the colors of any of the plants will look well, it being as near as possible to the color of water—chromium water green—which is to be used in a very light tint. It is to be observed that the sea-weeds on these designs cover the centre of the plates under the shells, leaving only a small portion of the ground in the border to be colored.

To begin with the plate at the top left-hand side of the sheet: the sea-weed is in a solid tint of crimson purple shaded with brown No. 4 or 17. The color, though moderately dark, must not look heavy or muddy. The shading should be sparingly used and put on with light touches, so as not to disturb the under color. Outline with brown. The shell form in the centre is of a yellow gray—pearl gray No. 6, tinted with very delicate pink; carnation No. 1, shaded with purple toward the edges (light violet of gold added to a little gray No. 6). The sea-weeds may be outlined or not as desired. A fine gold outline

would be very handsome, but the gold, we need hardly say, would have to be put on after the colors have been fired.

The sea-weed in the second design is of a clear pink (carnation No. 1, flesh). The color is quite deep in the centre under the shell, growing a little lighter toward the ends, and should be clear and evenly graded, not streaked in any part. For the shell use pearl gray No. 6

shaded with neutral gray, with a little deep blue green added toward the centre and edges. Outline with violet of iron.

The sea-weed in the third design, at the bottom of the page, may be colored with yellow brown very light in tint, shading with the same; or with purple (light violet of gold) shaded with brown No. 4 or 17; or it may be painted green (brown green No. 6). Tint the shell very delicately with carnation No. 1, flesh, shading with pearl gray No. 6; scrape off the color where the spots are with a sharp knife, and touch them on one side with yellow (silver yellow), which should be put on very thin.

In the fourth plate (top right hand) the weeds are of a dull green (deep green), running into blue and deep blue green at the edges. Outline with brown green No. 6. The centre is yellow gray (pearl gray No. 6), with light silver yellow tinting into the centre and delicate pink on the edges; shade with light touches of neutral gray, outlining with the gray strong or gold.

The fifth plate has a pointed sea-weed of a pale bluish green. Use deep blue green—a flat tint. The ends are pink—a light tint of carnation No. 1. Outline with a very fine line of ruby purple. The centre is painted in shades of olive green (brown green No. 6), shading yellowish toward the centre (a little yellow ochre mixed with the green will give this shade), and where the second form lies under the centre one.

The sixth plate has a rose pink sea-weed. Use carmine No. 2, medium tint, for this. Some of the extreme tips are touched with delicate green (grass green No. 5). The shell is silver yellow very delicately laid on, shaded with bluish gray (neutral gray), with touches of warm brown No. 108 on the edges. Outline with brown or gold.

Although markedly conventionalized, the sea-weeds and shells still retain their individual characteristics of form. The designs given this month are only half of the set. The rest will follow next month.